



Evangel’s Peyton ‘Pop’ Houston makes a verbal commitment

SPORTS, 1B

THE TOWN TALK

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2025
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK
ALEXANDRIA-PINEVILLE, LOUISIANA

Gaines blames ‘right wing extremism’ for political violence

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana Democratic Party Chairman Randal Gaines blamed “right wing extremism” for a contentious political climate after the party’s headquarters

was vandalized in the wake of the Charlie Kirk assassination. Democratic Party officials discovered the word “murderers” written in red spray paint on the office parking lot when they came to work on Sept. 12, two days after conservative activist Charlie Kirk was assassinated on a Utah college

campus. Gaines said he can’t say with certainty the incident was connected to the Kirk murder, but “I can say there has been an increase in the hostile political climate” in an interview with
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Cheneyville chief of police arrested

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Cheneyville’s chief of police was arrested Thursday, booked into jail on charges related to the alleged sexual abuse of a child, according to Louisiana State Police. A news release states the agency’s Special Victims Unit received a report about the alleged abuse of a child in the Cheneyville community. During the investigation, 37-year-old Charles A. Issac of Lecompte was identified as the suspect, it reads. “Based on the findings of the investigation, arrest warrants were obtained for Issac on the charges of molestation of a juvenile, sexual battery of a victim under the age of 13 and aggravated crimes against nature,” reads the release. Issac was booked into the Rapides Parish Detention Center #1, according to the release. He remains in jail with bail set at \$750,000. A call to Cheneyville Mayor Ronny Green Jr. to ask about Issac’s employment status was not answered on Thursday afternoon. An email was not immediately answered, either. The release does state the alleged abuse did not happen while Issac was on duty. The investigation is “active and ongoing,” it reads.

Louisiana’s state fossil is petrified palmwood

Presley Bo Tyler
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

In the U.S., many states have an official state fossil, or even a designated state dinosaur. Some states recognize an official dinosaur in celebration of the specific region’s paleontology, and others may recognize an official fossil to celebrate the area’s natural history. While Louisiana may not have an official state dinosaur, it does, in fact, have an official, state-recognized fossil.

Why is Louisiana’s state fossil petrified palm wood? What to know

Louisiana’s state fossil is petrified palmwood, which is of the genus *Palmoxydon*, and it was officially designated as such by the Louisiana state legislature in 1976. Petrified palmwood is wood that has turned into a stone-like substance over the course of millions of years. This type of petrified wood is prominently from the Oligocene period,

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An Eastern Bloodsucking Conenose Kissing Bug (*Triatoma sanguisuga*) sits on a leaf in Houston, Texas.
BRETT HONDOW/GETTY IMAGES

‘Kissing bug’ disease reported in Louisiana

Makenzie Boucher
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

An endemic disease is present in Louisiana. As of Sept. 9, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), showed Louisiana as state where chagas disease is present. Louisiana is among many southern states that has reported cases of the chagas disease -- caused by *Trypanosoma cruzi* (T. cruzi) parasites. According to the CDC emerging infectious diseases, T. cruzi is transmitted through congenital, oral and vectorborne routes -- “kissing bug.” USA TODAY reported that of the 31 states where the “kissing bugs” have been found, humans were reported to

have locally contracted the chagas disease in eight states. That means the disease is contracted locally. There is no federal data on the number of chagas cases in the United States because it is not a nationally notifiable disease.
Chagas symptoms
According to USA TODAY, chagas disease has two stages. The first stage -- acute phase, occurs within the first few weeks or months of infection. Common symptoms include:
● Fever
● Feeling tired
● Body aches
● Headache
● Rash

● Loss of appetite
● Diarrhea
● Vomiting
The second stage -- chronic phase may last many years or even a lifetime. Symptoms include:
● Heart problems, such as an enlarged heart, heart failure, altered heart rate or rhythm, or sudden death.
● Digestive problems, such as an enlarged esophagus or colon, can lead to trouble eating or going to the bathroom. According to the CDC, about 20% to 30% of people infected with Chagas disease experience serious symptoms. *Greta Cross contributed to this story.*
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